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South Carolina's Cultural Visions for Rural Communities

Progress should not have to imply the destruction of uniqueness. In fact, it may be that preserving cultural uniqueness can provide both a humanity and a competitive economic edge as the next century approaches.

Ruby Lerner, *Not By Bread Alone*

Cover: *Tuberose* by nationally known artist Jim Harrison captures the essence of "Rural Americana." A native of South Carolina, Harrison has contributed significantly to preserving the state's cultural heritage. He demonstrates his love for rural culture in other ways as well—for example, he served for 3 years as Chairman of the Denmark Downtown Development Association, leading an effort to build his town's economic future on the legacy of the past.

South Carolina's Cultural Visions for Rural Communities

The Vision

Each rural community in South Carolina will develop and implement a comprehensive cultural plan that reflects the unique qualities of that community and integrates with its particular socio-economic environment. This plan should become an integral part of the community's economic development strategy.

The Mission

1. To stimulate rural cultural development in South Carolina through a continuing partnership between cultural and economic agencies and organizations and local entities.
2. To develop a comprehensive action plan for cultural development in rural South Carolina.

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STATE DOCUMENTS

Report issue date: May 1991

Introduction

In rural areas, which often have inherent problems attracting industry, the arts may be even more crucial to economic development than they are in urban areas.

Artists—and lovers of the arts, too—believe wholeheartedly in “arts for art’s sake.” But as the Palmetto State approaches the next century, an economic rationale for the arts and culture has also become apparent. That rationale is simple: the arts and culture (broadly defined to include indigenous culture, crafts, and the like) help our communities attract new investment. This is true because the availability of cultural activities is an important consideration in choosing a new location for business, according to 99 percent of chief executive officers surveyed recently by the South Carolina Legislature’s Joint Cultural Affairs Committee.

In rural areas, which often have inherent problems attracting industry, the arts may be even more crucial to economic development than they are in urban areas.

It is this fact of life that led to “Cultural Visions for Rural Communities,” a project funded by the National Endowment for the Arts. The South Carolina Arts Commission was one of only eight state arts agencies selected by the NEA to receive pilot funding for a rural arts development project.

This pilot project presents an exciting opportunity to enhance the cultural quality of life in South Carolina’s rural communities. This quality of life, as the Arts Commission well knows, pays off handsomely. For every \$1 spent by the cultural industry, \$1.92 is ultimately spent by other businesses in the state, according to a 1987 study conducted by the University of South Carolina’s College of Business Administration.

The cultural industry spent \$127.5 million directly within South Carolina during 1987. This expenditure produced an estimated \$2.2 million in sales tax revenue for South Carolina. The cultural industry also creates jobs. A total of 12,745 South Carolinians were employed in 6,026 cultural industry full- and part-time jobs during 1987, working a total of 4.6 million hours, the USC study showed. For every \$1 million spent by the cultural industry, 47 jobs are generated.

Through the “Cultural Visions for Rural Communities” project, state leaders aim to create a clear view of, and a comprehensive interagency action plan for, the kind of cultural development that will help rural areas share in the economic bonanza that to date has been enjoyed primarily by urban areas.

This vision is that each rural community in South Carolina will develop and implement a comprehensive cultural plan that reflects the unique qualities of that community and blends with its particular socio-economic environment. This plan should become an integral part of that community’s economic development strategy.

The “Cultural Visions” project began in 1990, when the S.C. Arts Commission invited the Governor’s Office, the S.C. State Development Board, the S.C. Downtown Development Association, the Joint Legislative Committee on Cultural Affairs, Clemson University, and the S.C. Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism to join in sponsoring a Rural Arts Task Force. The Task Force had a two-fold mission: (1) to stimulate rural cultural develop-

ment in South Carolina through continuing partnerships between state agencies and organizations and local entities; and (2) to develop a comprehensive action plan for cultural development in rural South Carolina.

To help formulate that plan, which is presented here, the Task Force created five subcommittees. Between August and December 1990, the subcommittees met with experts and other consultants.

Subcommittee reports on Partnership and Networking, Unique Qualities, Long-term Actions, Short-term Actions, and an Inventory of Current Resources, were completed in January 1991. The final report includes a compilation of subcommittee findings and recommendations that were then honed by the Task Force Coordinating Committee.

The product of the Task Force, a comprehensive action plan for cultural development, is presented here. But this is just the first phase of our work. Now it is time to implement the plan.



State of South Carolina

Office of the Governor

CARROLL A. CAMPBELL, JR.
GOVERNOR

Post Office Box 11369
COLUMBIA 29211

Dear Fellow South Carolinians:

The Cultural Visions for Rural Communities Report provides a comprehensive plan to stimulate cultural development in the rural communities of South Carolina.

This document represents the effort of individuals from both public and private sectors, who were charged with the task of developing a blueprint for improving the quality of life in rural areas through cultural development. It is important as our state grows through business, industry and jobs, that cultural development not be neglected, but enhanced through cooperative endeavors between the economic and cultural communities.

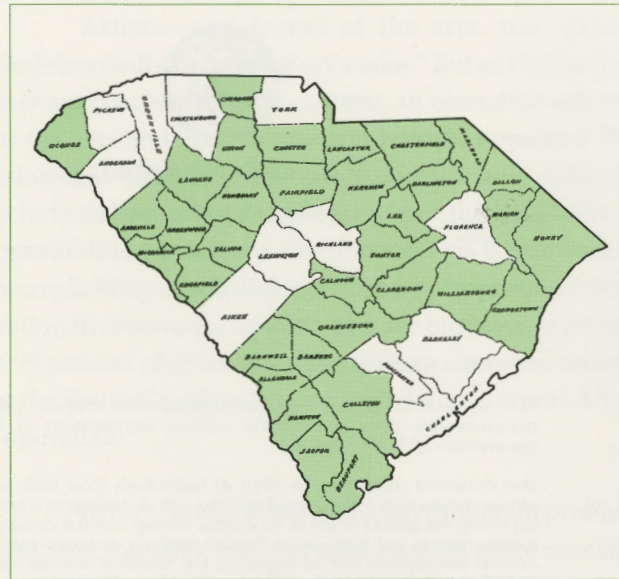
I commend the hard work and effort that went into producing this report, and encourage its use as a guide for local initiatives for cultural enhancement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Carroll A. Campbell, Jr.".

Carroll A. Campbell, Jr.
Governor

Definitions



■ South Carolina's Rural Counties

For the purposes of this report, the following definitions are provided:

- **"Cultural"** is a broad term that is difficult to define. But we will define it here as a broad spectrum of ideas, customs, and skills of a given group of people in a given place. In this report, "cultural" refers to ethnic heritage as well as customs and traditions, unique qualities, economic environment, historical assets, religion, arts, architecture, and landscape in rural areas and small towns.
- **"Rural"** means non-urban. It further refers to (1) the 34 South Carolina counties designated as rural (population under 100,000) by the S.C. State Development Board; and (2) non-urban areas of urban counties.
- **"Arts"** refers to the complete spectrum of artistic endeavors, including visual, performing, literary, folk, media, design, music and theater arts; plus dance, crafts, and other creative endeavors.

Rural South Carolina

The emergence of “two South Carolinas”—one urban and relatively prosperous, the other rural and relatively poor—became evident in the 1970s and ’80s. We may live in the Sunbelt, as a 1986 Ford Foundation report explained, but “there is a dark cloud hanging over many of our rural neighbors.”

That cloud has formed, said the “Shadows in the Sunbelt” report, because agriculture and manufacturing—“the traditional sources of jobs and wealth in the South—are declining simultaneously.” This decline is undermining local economies, displacing industrial workers, and creating serious problems for the many farm families in the South who rely on second incomes from manufacturing. At the same time, federal support for rural economic development has been sharply reduced, and many programs have been eliminated.

In South Carolina, the upstate rural areas have been losing their manufacturing base (particularly textiles and apparel) as workers can no longer compete with the lower wage rates in several Third World nations. The Lowcountry rural counties lacked this base to begin with; what employment expansion is occurring is in the spillover counties near the growth centers, i.e. the urban counties and the tourist-rich coastal counties.

The economic forecast for rural areas is not expected to improve in the foreseeable future. Non-durable goods manufacturing employment—most often located in rural areas—is projected to continue to decrease at least until the

year 2000, according to the Southern Growth Policies Board’s Committee on Southern Trends. At the same time, industries such as finance, real estate, insurance, trade, and producer services—most often located in metropolitan areas—are expected to expand the most by the year 2000.

Lower educational levels in rural South Carolina and other Southern states are also problematic. In the rural South, only half of the adults age 25 and over have earned high school diplomas, compared to an average of two-thirds in Southern cities and nationwide. College graduates comprise just 10 percent of the population in the rural South—40 percent below the national average. Probably because of these educational deficiencies, urban industrialists have been willing to shift routine production functions to the rural work force, but have shown little inclination to locate more advanced functions, such as product research and development, in rural communities.

Even the historic strengths of rural economies—an abundance of natural resources and the availability of low-cost labor and land—are no longer able to help rural areas close the income gap with urban areas. And even these jobs may be harder to find in the future.

Increasingly, then, the economic potential of rural areas depends not so much on what can be taken from them or produced in them, but on *their desirability as places to live*. More and more Americans express a desire to live in small towns or in rural areas. And in recent years, the most rapid

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growth in rural areas has been in two groups of counties: those within commuting distance of metropolitan areas, and those found attractive as places to retire.

Designing effective strategies to build brighter futures for rural communities will not be easy. But capitalizing on Americans' desires to live in smaller towns is possible—and increasing the cultural and artistic liveability of rural areas is one failsafe way.

The town of Abbeville, and the county of Williamsburg, are two shining examples of rural communities that have done just that. Abbeville, in western South Carolina, is quintessential small-town America. With its attractive town square and courthouse, turn-of-the-century Victorian architecture, and groves of stately old trees, Abbeville is seemingly 19th-century America come to life.

But Abbeville is a town that used to be hurting financially dependent on farms and textiles for its economic well-being. A decision by farsighted city officials that economic diversification was needed led to a revitalization of the town's future by preserving its past.

The revitalization effort led by George Settles, director of the Abbeville County Development Board, began in 1968 with the restoration of the Opera House on the town square. (Today, plays are presented there 36 weeks a year.) It continued in 1977 with restoration of the original facades of the buildings around the square. And it continues today via The Abbeville Project, a county-wide

joint venture of government and private citizens to preserve the rich cultural heritage of Abbeville and stimulate cultural awareness and economic development through tourism. As part of the project, Piedmont Technical College held a two-day symposium in the spring of 1991 in Abbeville called "Building Partnerships Between Historical Preservation and Economic Development Interests." Funded by the South Carolina Humanities Council, the workshop focused on the need to preserve and restore the cultural legacy of Victorian architecture in South Carolina.

Williamsburg County, too, is a success story. This poor, rural, predominantly black county in eastern South Carolina began its rebirth in 1985 when Abie Wilson, a Williamsburg County native who for many years had been a school principal, drama teacher, and city official in New York, returned home. In short order, he formed the Williamsburg Concerned Citizens for the Arts (now called the Williamsburg Arts Council) to help the black community find its own cultural identity, strengthen racial pride, and foster appreciation for the arts among white and black citizens alike. This was done by, among other things, refocusing attention on Williamsburg County's traditional and indigenous forms of arts and culture.

Williamsburg County residents and visitors today can enjoy children's theater classes, performances for senior citizens, Arts in Education residencies in public schools, an art gallery, and a community theater program. These activities, of course, are a boon to the local economy.

A \$300 million fiber plant under construction by Nan Ya Plastics Corporation of Taiwan on the border of Florence and Williamsburg counties, will also be a boon to the local economy. But the community expects it will be much more. Because of its past success, county residents are expecting the Williamsburg County Arts Council to take the lead in highlighting and incorporating the culture of the new Taiwanese residents into the local community.

Beauty—in all its forms—is truly the South's “money crop,” as *Halfway Home and a Long Way to Go*, the 1986 report by the Commission on the Future of the South, said it was. Using cultural assets to spur economic development is an excellent use of our “money crop.”

Beauty—in all its forms—is truly the South's “money crop.”

Cultural Development in South Carolina

Despite the homogenizing influences of 20th-century American life, the South continues to maintain a distinctive regional identity.

The cultural roots of South Carolina are deeply imbedded in the past. Our state has been marked by wars (in fact, devastated by one) and enriched by diverse influences that include Native American, English, French, Spanish, African, German, Scots-Irish, and Welsh.

This past has resulted in a distinctive trait setting South Carolinians and other Southerners apart from the rest of the country. That trait is remembering its history, says historian C. Vann Woodward, "...the collective experience of the Southern people (white and black) who have had a unique historic experience as Americans."

Despite the homogenizing influences of 20th-century American life, the South continues to maintain a distinctive regional identity. Sociologist and cultural historian John Shelton Reed has confirmed this mindset. When Americans are asked where they would live if they could live anywhere they wanted, Reed writes, "Southerners were more likely than other Americans (save only Californians), to say, 'right here,' and they have been more likely to say this for at least a half century."

People residing in Southern states are "more likely than other Americans (again, except for Californians) to tell pollsters that 'the best American state' is their own," Reed continues. And "Southerners have been at least as likely as other Americans to leave their home region," but because of recent economic development, "fewer now leave, and many who left earlier are returning."

In the Palmetto State today, there is no typical South Carolinian. The cultural heritage of the state can be discovered, instead, in a rich patchwork of ethnic, religious, political, economic, intellectual, and artistic expression.

South Carolinians in 1991 are not only descendents of the Native Americans who migrated here long ago, or of the early European settlers who began coming to the Carolina shores in the 16th century, or of the African slaves who followed a little later. They are also retirees moving into the state from other parts of the country, business people relocating from the Northeast and Midwest, and members of nearly a score of other nationalities with substantial investments in South Carolina business and industry.

Among Lowcountry Gullah speakers (those using the slave language forged out of diverse African and English speech), there are the "kum-yahs" and the "bin-yahs": those who have just come and those who have been here for a long time. These are apt phrases to describe South Carolinians of today. Together, they are people who are keenly interested in the history of the state and the region, and who have a wide range of cultural interests. They all have an important stake in the issues affecting quality of life in South Carolina—issues such as education, cultural enrichment, economic development, health care, and the environment.

South Carolinians, whether new to the state or native-born, share an appreciation of their sense of place. No matter what their social status or ethnic identity, they are sensitive to history and culture.

The task of overseeing this cultural diversity has fallen, in large part, to the South Carolina Arts Commission. Formed in 1967, the Arts Commission has directed a broad spectrum of cultural activities. For the purpose of this report, however, we will focus on the Commission's rural cultural development actions—which have been considerable.

Since 1981 the South Carolina Arts Commission has cultivated a Rural Arts Program recognized as one of the best in the nation. What started 10 years ago as a technical assistance program in four pilot communities has grown to include 26 of 46 counties in South Carolina, with over \$600,000 expended by the Rural Arts Program in 32 communities.

In fiscal 1989, a total of \$472,234 in matching grants and program services was awarded to the state's rural counties with local matching funds totaling \$1,272,362. Over the past ten years, 33 arts councils have been developed in the 34 counties designated as rural by the State Development Board.

These arts councils have sponsored such programs as performing arts series, in-school artistic performances,

mobile arts trucks that bring arts and crafts to rural areas, visual arts exhibits, arts-in-education residencies, arts festivals and events, and training workshops. The arts councils, supported by local leaders, have encouraged local artists to focus once again on traditional indigenous art forms that may have been neglected in recent times.

The result is a vibrant cultural identity that is now defining South Carolina's rural areas.

In the Palmetto State today, there is no typical South Carolinian. The cultural heritage of the state can be discovered, instead, in a rich patchwork of ethnic, religious, political, economic, intellectual, and artistic expression.

Findings and Recommendations

South Carolina's small towns and rural areas are major repositories of the state's cultural assets and values.

The "Cultural Visions for Rural Communities" Task Force appointed five sub-groups to discuss and formulate findings and recommendations. The five sub-groups were:

- **Unique qualities**—to develop an inventory of unique qualities found in rural communities that could be incorporated into a cultural and economic development program and used by rural communities to assess their unique qualities.
- **Partnership and networking**—to develop a mechanism for stimulating collaborative efforts at the state, regional, and local levels, and to identify creative partnerships at all levels for cultural development in rural areas.
- **Short-term actions**—to identify specific actions that might be taken in the next three years to enhance cultural development in rural communities.
- **Long-term actions**—to identify actions that should be taken by the year 2000 to enhance cultural development in rural communities.
- **Inventory**—to identify current resources available to small rural communities for cultural development, current state-level cultural programs that target rural communities, and successful models of rural cultural development projects and programs.

Overall Findings

South Carolina's small towns and rural areas are major repositories of the state's cultural assets and values. Our rural communities reflect the historic, ethnic, religious, artistic, and agricultural traditions of the Palmetto State.

The entire state must understand the importance of these cultural assets, and must work to identify the cultural treasures that can be used to spur economic growth. In addition, rural South Carolinians must design strategies to utilize effectively their areas' cultural capital. Collectively, these cultural assets can help rural South Carolinians establish a quality of life that can attract residents, visitors, investment, and industry.

All of this will require state-level assistance plus an extraordinary degree of cooperation and coordination among economic development organizations and cultural groups at all levels.

The findings and recommendations that follow are designed to foster this cooperative process. For the sake of clarity, the findings and recommendations have been classified into five categories: (A) Networking, (B) Funding, (C) Education, (D) Technical Assistance, and (E) Advocacy.

NETWORKING

Findings

- There are many existing rural systems (such as the Clemson University Extension Service) that deliver information, ideas, and motivation. Included are schools, libraries, churches, senior citizen groups, and local arts councils. Local institutions or programs with special expertise in the rural arts should be consulted.
- Cooperation and coordination are essential in today's climate of limited funding. Regional efforts should be considered when appropriate. Local rivalries shouldn't be an obstacle to effective use of limited resources.
- Coordination at the state level prevents duplication of effort and mixed messages. "Turf" issues must be confronted and resolved.
- A cultural/economic partnership targets schools, churches, libraries, local arts agencies, museums, and other appropriate community institutions.
- Business and industry have a vital stake in South Carolina's economic and cultural well-being. Supporting cultural enhancement in our rural areas is simply good business.
- Collaborative efforts among the S.C. Arts Commission, the Governor's Office, the S.C. State Development Board, the S.C. Downtown Development Asso-

ciation, the Joint Legislative Committee on Cultural Affairs, the S.C. Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, and the Clemson Extension Service could provide an excellent approach to plugging cultural development parameters into economic and community development. Other potential partners are the Economic Development Coordinating Council, regional tourism organizations, regional councils of governments, the Governor's School for the Arts, the Palmetto Leadership Program, the S.C. Municipal and County Associations, the S.C. Department of Archives and History, the S.C. State Library, the Sunrise Foundation, the Palmetto Conservation Foundation, the S.C. Humanities Council, the S.C. Department of Education, the S.C. Press Association, the S.C. Arts Alliance, S.C. Educational Television and Radio, the Confederation of S.C. Local Historical Societies, the S.C. Federation of Museums, the Palmetto Trust for Historic Preservation, the Palmetto Project, cable television stations, local arts councils, civic organizations, the news media, technical colleges, and schools of education at colleges and universities.

Short-term Recommendations

(To Be Implemented in 1-to-3 Years)

- Create a Statewide Rural Cultural Coordinating Council that would include state cultural and economic development agencies and organizations. This Council would assign responsibility for implementing rec-

Business and industry have a vital stake in South Carolina's economic and cultural well-being. Supporting cultural enhancement in our rural areas is simply good business.

Findings and Recommendations

ommendations in this report and would coordinate planning and communication among the agencies involved. One of the Council's first tasks would be to determine how to involve the private sector.

- *Annually convene a meeting of the Cultural Visions Task Force to identify and celebrate cultural advances in rural communities.*
- *Promote awareness at the statewide level of the importance of cultural development, and work with other state boards and commissions to include cultural input.*
- *Use existing community organizations and facilities more creatively in working toward long-term cultural objectives in the rural areas.*
- *Establish a formal linkage between the S.C. Arts Commission and existing regional entities, such as the Councils of Government and regional tourism agencies. This linkage would broaden the reach of the Arts Commission and stimulate local awareness and actions for cultural purposes.*
- *Expand the board of directors of the Arts Alliance to include business sector representatives who would advocate rural cultural development.*
- *Encourage the S.C. State Library to institute cooperative programs, such as collecting oral history, establishing*

rural arts resource centers and media centers, and using library facilities for cultural programs.

Long-term Recommendations

(To Be Implemented in 4-to-10 Years)

- *Work with Clemson University to incorporate a cultural component into its Extension Service. This component would include training for Extension Agents and identifying specific cultural programs that could be included in university programs.*
- *Identify appropriate rural counties and encourage them to apply a multi-agency approach to integrated cultural/economic development planning and implementation.*
- *Strengthen the S.C. Arts Commission's capacity to work with all counties in the state to ensure the development and stabilization of local arts agencies.*

FUNDING

Findings

- *Currently, there is no recurring source of tax revenue to support cultural development in South Carolina.*
- *Additional funds are needed to develop arts and humanities education programs in public schools in rural areas.*

Short-term Recommendation

- *Study, identify, and earmark a recurring source of tax revenue to support cultural development in South Carolina.*

Long-term Recommendations

- *Secure adequate funding for the state's artistically gifted and talented pupils.*
- *Secure adequate funding to ensure that the arts become a basic part of the curriculum for all South Carolina students.*

EDUCATION

Findings

- *Artistically talented people living in rural areas need additional training opportunities.*
- *Community decision makers need to be more informed about the importance of cultural development, both for its own sake and for its link to economic development.*
- *There are long-time rural residents who remember South Carolina at the turn of the century. Their oral histories would be a priceless addition to state archives.*

- *Educators at all levels in South Carolina should be encouraged to become involved in community and cultural development issues.*

Short-term Recommendations

- *Expand the Target 2000 Arts Education Program to support the further development and implementation of comprehensive arts curricula in all rural public schools.*
- *Produce a "How-to" guide to help communities identify their cultural assets and establish cultural development programs that will promote economic development. This guide should consist of a video that tells of South Carolina communities that have already done this successfully. It should also include a workbook that explains step-by-step how to promote economic development by using a community's cultural assets.*
- *Develop an in-service training plan to help rural professionals (teachers, librarians, pastors, tourism and arts administrators, downtown managers, etc.) increase their knowledge and use of distinct cultural features in their areas.*
- *Ask South Carolina ETV and Public Radio to help produce a comprehensive program of public service announcements to promote the importance of rural cultural development.*
- *Update the 1987 University of South Carolina study that quantified the economic importance of the cultural industry in South Carolina.*

Long-term Recommendations

- *Introduce a curriculum program into the public schools that covers the full range of South Carolina's cultural heritage.*
- *Petition the S.C. Commission on Higher Education to (1) encourage that professors and instructors be evaluated on public service as well as traditional factors, and (2) make community cultural development an important part of the agendas of university branch campuses and technical schools. In some cases, this would be an expansion of current efforts; in other cases, new programs would need to be initiated. A task force should be created to study and recommend appropriate programs. Whenever possible, these institutions should work with other local organizations to promulgate these recommendations.*
- *Expand the rural outreach efforts of the Governor's School for the Arts.*
- *Develop a summer cultural institute at a college or university to train community leaders in cultural planning.*

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Findings

- South Carolina has an abundance of cultural resources that are available to local communities.
- Many rural areas don't know what state and regional resources are available to help them develop cultural

programs. In addition, many rural areas aren't aware of their own unique features that could help them develop successful cultural programs.

This could be remedied by having people and organizations compile cultural inventories of the spatial, physical, and traditional expressive features of their areas on the state, regional, and community levels. More compatible computer mapping and archiving systems, such as geographic information systems, are especially needed. Physical cultural resources, such as historic sites, homes, and buildings, should be recorded. Intangible cultural resources, such as distinct occupational, religious, or recreational traditions, should be documented.

Short-term Recommendations

- *The S.C. Arts Commission should compile and publish a current inventory of state and regional resources available to local towns to help them develop cultural programs and strategies. If necessary, an outside individual should be hired to do this.*
- *The S.C. Arts Commission should review its policy and program guidelines to enhance their applicability to rural communities.*

Long-term Recommendation

- *Secure additional staff for the S.C. Arts Commission to work with other participating agencies to implement and monitor the "Cultural Visions" Plan.*

ADVOCACY

Findings

- "Cultural Visions for Rural Communities" is a continuing process, not a program or project that has a specific ending date.
- Every small community has unique qualities that can be turned into marketing material. These qualities can be identified and incorporated into an overall economic development strategy.
- Communities that define their own cultural strengths, develop a cultural plan, and determine the assistance they will need will have an edge over those who don't.
- Formal approval of the Governor and the Legislature is vital to the "Cultural Visions" effort.
- The S.C. Arts Commission is the appropriate agency to coordinate the "Cultural Visions" process, but the Commission will need help from a broad range of public and private groups.

Short-term Recommendations

- *Ask the Governor to annually declare a week to celebrate South Carolina's arts and culture. This designation would create a favorable environment in which to introduce new cultural programs in rural areas.*
- *Endorse and emphasize the importance of the ABC (Arts in Basic Curriculum) Plan in rural areas. Encourage rural schools to participate in the artist-in-residency programs and to involve the artists in community activities.*
- *Encourage existing community and economic development groups and programs to include cultural development activities on their agendas. Included would be the Palmetto Leadership Program, the S.C. State Development Board, technical college curricula, municipal and county association meetings, PRT conferences, SCDDA activities, etc.*
- *Encourage groups such as the S.C. Municipal Association, the S.C. County Association, and the S.C. Downtown Development Association to include annual reports on cultural issues and development at their annual meetings.*
- *Present awards and recognition for rural cultural development programs that promote economic development whenever appropriate opportunities exist.*

- *Establish outlets for South Carolina-produced arts and crafts in several locations around the state. Consider opening these outlets in rural locations where tourism or other travel patterns indicate they would be appropriate.*

Long-term Recommendation

- *Establish a task force to study the economic feasibility of creating—and then advocate for—a “Folk Life Center” in South Carolina.*

Conclusion

South Carolina is a poor state, financially-speaking. It is rich in arts and culture, however, and a civilization is reflected through its artists and its cultural life.

The Palmetto State has many forms of artistic and cultural expression to share: drawing, painting, and sculpture; woodcarving, pottery, weaving, basketry, furniture making, needlework, and quilting; dance; singing and playing music; literature; theatre performance; photography, filmmaking, and storytelling. There are other, everyday things done in special, local ways: cooking, gardening, fashion, customs and rituals used to celebrate holidays or commemorate important events.

Our arts and culture are luxuriant, deserving of preservation and celebration for their own sakes. But it's also true, as the Southern Growth Policies Board reminds us, that "plays, paintings, pottery and pretty landscapes create significant economic benefits," as well. If this is so in urban areas—and studies have shown that it is—it is doubly true for rural areas which traditionally have had difficulty attracting economic development.

Huge sums of money don't need to be spent to improve our extraordinary cultural assets. By taking advantage of local and state resources that already exist, and by networking more assiduously, South Carolina's rural areas can improve their cultural and artistic offerings and better their economic status at the same time.

Clearly, it is time for more of South Carolina's rural communities to improve their artistic and cultural climates, both as a way of celebrating the region's past and investing in its future.

The "Cultural Visions for Rural Communities" Plan will provide the blueprint to do just that.

We are fortunate to have so much richness and beauty in our State. It is my great hope that this plan will help us develop these assets that are so uniquely South Carolina in order to create a more satisfying and fulfilling existence for all our citizens and for visitors to our State.

Senator John C. Land
Chair, Cultural Visions for Rural
Communities Task Force

The success of the Cultural Visions Plan depends on partnerships between state and local leaders who are committed to progress and preservation in South Carolina's rural communities.

Rep. Harriet H. Keyserling
Chair, Joint Legislative Committee
on Cultural Affairs

Clearly, it is time for more of South Carolina's rural communities to improve their artistic and cultural climates, both as a way of celebrating the region's past and investing in its future.

Cultural Visions for Rural Communities Task Force

Coordinating Committee

Senator John C. Land, Task Force Chair &
Vice Chair, Joint Legislative Committee on Cultural Affairs

Ben Boozer, Task Force Project Coordinator &
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Project Partners

The South Carolina Arts Commission
The Governor's Office
The South Carolina Downtown Development Association
The South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism
The South Carolina State Development Board
The Joint Legislative Committee on Cultural Affairs
Clemson University

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Jack Blodgett, *Clemson University-Project Reach*
John C. Blythe, *Savannah Valley Authority*
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